



STATE OF WASHINGTON

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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July 2003 Animal Health Newsletter

### State Veterinarian's message

Now I see what they mean when they say, "It's lonely at the top". With Dr. Mead's retirement, I've been filling his shoes, rattling around in "The Big Office". Dr. Mead retired as State Veterinarian on June 30 after 17 years in state service. I'll act in his stead until the State Veterinarian's position is officially filled.

Some updates on what we've been working on—

In May, an alert Columbia Basin practitioner notified Dr. Lee Williams, Animal Health Area Veterinarian in Moses Lake, that a client had lost 3 six-month-old steers in a few days time. Upon examination of the carcasses, the practitioner found dark blood coming from all orifices and immediately suspected anthrax. He carefully collected samples and the herd was quarantined. The carcasses were burned after being isolated from the other cows and calves in the herd.

Tests were negative for anthrax, with a Clostridial infection suspected. Thanks to WADDL for the quick response in testing these samples.

Suspect cases of anthrax are immediately reportable to the State Veterinarian. With public awareness of anthrax, following recent national events and our emphasis and involvement in bioterrorism, all practitioners and livestock producers need to be on the alert for conditions such as this.

Incidentally, when our office is closed during holidays, weekends and after normal business hours or you are unable to reach one of the Animal Health Area Veterinarians, you can report diseases through the State Emergency Operations Center. The State EOC Officer can be reached at 1-800-258-5990, 24 hours per day. The officer on duty will then contact me, so an investigation can be started, if necessary.

We continue to provide information, educational materials and presentations to the public, bird owners and poultry producers about the Exotic Newcastle Disease outbreak. Quarantines have been released from counties in Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico and Texas. Arizona, Nevada and Texas still maintain their quarantines on the original infected premises. California's eradication efforts are going well and the quarantines may be lifted soon.

We are fortunate that END did not spread throughout the US. Southern California has been battling END since October 2002, with the disease spreading among backyard poultry and to 22 commercial poultry operations. More than 3.5 million birds have been euthanized. Eradication efforts are going well, but because END is a foreign animal disease and trade restrictions can be harsh, it will be some time before California fully recovers international markets for poultry and poultry products.

Who would have imagined that a virus common to Central and West Africa would appear in the US? After monkey pox virus-positive animals were found in Wisconsin, Indiana, Illinois and New Jersey this spring, the 1<sup>st</sup> human case in North America was identified May 15. The investigation continues in 6 states. Positive animals have **not** been traced to Washington State. There have **not** been any cases identified in humans or other animals in Washington State.

CDC and FDA issued a joint order June 11 restricting interstate shipment of prairie dogs and six species of African-origin rodents. We will not grant entry permits for importation of tree squirrels (*Heliosciurus* sp.), rope squirrels (*Funisciurus* sp.), dormice (*Graphiurus* sp.), Gambian giant pouched rats (*Cricetomys* sp.), brush-tailed porcupines (*Atherurus* sp.) or striped mice (*Hybomys* sp.).

Health officials believe the virus was introduced into the US by infected Gambian giant pouched rats imported from Africa in April. Federal and state human health and veterinary epidemiologists theorize the imported rats may have spread monkey pox to a group of American prairie dogs that had been captured for the pet trade. For more information about monkey pox, go to CDC's Web site at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/monkeypox/index.htm>.

In May, the owner finally decided to euthanize the 2 EIA-positive horses under quarantine in eastern Washington. The horses were moved in a sealed trailer, under a federal movement permit to WSU's College of Veterinary Medicine. Upon arrival, they were euthanized and tissue was harvested for EIA research. The positives were originally confirmed July 1, 2002, and the owner was keeping them in an approved lifetime quarantine facility in Grant County.

May also brought headlines and news coverage about the positive Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy (BSE or "mad cow disease") beef cow in Alberta, Canada. While the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, USDA and FDA handled this event at the national level in Canada and the US, effects were felt in Washington State. USDA imposed restrictions on Canadian exports, which resulted in closing the border to Canadian live ruminants and various animal products. Aquaculture operations, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife fish hatcheries and organic livestock producers were unable to obtain certain feeds because of the prohibition on importation of feeds with animal proteins. Also, hunters bagging cervids in Canada will be unable to return to the US with game meat from elk, moose, deer and caribou. For updates on this situation, go to <http://cofcs66.aphis.usda.gov/lpa/issues/bse/bse.html>.

As you can see by this abbreviated listing, there is no shortage of things to keep us busy. When handling all these issues, I'm always grateful for the strong working relationship with private practitioners, our local USDA Area Office, WADDL, WSU's College of Veterinary Medicine and others. Their help and support make my job that much easier.

Have a good summer. I'll check in again with the October issue of this newsletter.

*Kathleen M. Connell, DVM*

**DNA foils cattle rustler**—Science defeated a cattle rustler earlier this year when DNA testing was used to prove the theft of 7 calves. This was the 1<sup>st</sup> time DNA testing resolved a livestock complaint brought before the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA).

A Cheney area rancher accused Matthew David Goodwin, Deer Park, of stealing calves. WSDA recovered the calves and DNA testing confirmed that they were indeed the offspring of the rancher's cows. A modern-day scientific technique foiled one of our oldest professions, thanks to a joint 4-month investigation by the Washington State Patrol and 2 of our employees—our Livestock Investigator, Mr. Ron Ferguson, and Mr. Kris Budde, one of our Livestock Inspectors.

Goodwin pled guilty to charges of livestock theft and forgery in March 2003. He was sentenced to 30 days in jail and one year of community supervision and was ordered to pay a \$4,000 fine and \$5,600 in restitution, court costs and victim assessments.

#### **News from other states—**

- ♦ **California**—The state has Exotic Newcastle Disease on the run, with steps being taken towards lifting the quarantines. May 31 marked the last time a new infection had been found in backyard flocks. Commercial poultry operations have not discovered any new infections since March. At least 25 countries, including the European Union and Mexico, banned the importation of California poultry products following the discovery of END last October. Canada will remove its restrictions on importation of California poultry products in July, except for those products from California counties still under quarantine. (E-mail June 6; News release July 11, 2003)
- ♦ **Idaho**—Dr. Clarence Siroky accepted the position of State Veterinarian. Dr. Siroky most recently served as the Wisconsin State Veterinarian. His previous positions include Montana State Veterinarian and Assistant State Veterinarian for Washington State. Dr. Siroky replaces Dr. Dan Crowell, who was Idaho's Acting State Veterinarian. (E-mail May 28, 2003)
- ♦ **Illinois**—The Illinois State Veterinarian, Dr. Dick Hull, retired June 11. Dr. Lori Miser is serving as the Acting Chief Veterinarian. (E-mail June 26, 2003)
- ♦ **Michigan**—New World camelids (llama, alpaca, vicuña, guanaco) no longer need a negative Brucellosis test prior to importation into Michigan. The only requirements for these animals are an official interstate health certificate and individual official identification. For more information, contact the Michigan State Veterinarian's Office, 517-373-1077. (Memo from the Michigan State Veterinarian, May 12, 2003)

- ◆ **Minnesota**—A negative Anaplasmosis test is not longer required for cattle being imported into Minnesota. For more information, contact the Minnesota Board of Animal Health, 651-296-2942. (Memo from the Cattle Diseases Division, Minnesota Board of Animal Health, June 10, 2003)
- ◆ **Montana**—Dr. Arnold Gertonson resigned his position as Montana State Veterinarian on June 13. He accepted a position with USDA APHIS Veterinary Services as Yellowstone Brucellosis Coordinator, based in Ft. Collins, CO. Dr. Tom Linfield is now serving as the Acting State Veterinarian. (E-mail June 03, 2003)
- ◆ **New Mexico**—
  - Bovine Tuberculosis was found in 2 dairy herds in Roosevelt, New Mexico. The state will be reclassified from its free status, which will require beef and dairy cattle producers to TB test when transporting cattle out of state. Bovine TB has also been detected in Michigan, Texas and California. (News release June 12, 2003)
  - Exotic Newcastle Disease quarantines were released in Luna, Otero and Dona Anna Counties. The counties had been quarantined since April 10. (News release June 6, 2003)
- ◆ **Texas**—With the exception of a very small area of Socorro in El Paso County, the Exotic Newcastle Disease quarantines were released in El Paso and Hudspeth Counties. The counties had been quarantined since April 10. (News release June 6, 2003)

**WCA gets new leader**—The Washington Cattlemen's Association (WCA) announced its new Executive Vice President, Tim Kunka of Entiat, Washington. He began his duties on July 7. WCA is a statewide, non-profit trade organization representing cattle producers. Mr. Kunka can be reached at the WCA office in Ellensburg, 509-925-9871. (News release July 1, 2003)

**Safeguarding report on the Web**—A report is available at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs> on USDA's activities to safeguard US animal health. The report highlights activities in domestic detection and surveillance, exclusion, response, regional efforts, communications and outreach and international information. (Cattle Health Report, Spring 2003, p. 1)